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MAYOR EMANUEL OPENS NEW CTA TRAIN STATION AT WASHINGTON AND WABASH

First New Loop 'L' Station in 20 Years Replaces Two Century-Old Stations, Creating More Than 350 Jobs and Continuing Mayor's \$8 billion Transit Modernization Investment

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. and CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld to open the new Washington/Wabash Station, a brand new gateway to Millennium Park and the east Loop, and the first new downtown 'L' station to open in 20 years.

"The new CTA station at Washington and Wabash represents the best of Chicago's heritage of architectural innovation and ingenuity while creating modern amenities for the thousands of travelers who utilize it every day," Mayor Emanuel said. "We have made unprecedented investments to modernize transportation throughout Chicago, and this new station combines that commitment with our city's culture.

Built between Madison and Washington Streets, over Wabash Avenue, the \$75 million station makes a bold architectural statement and replaces two stations that were built more than 120 years ago. The new station is first fully accessible for persons with disabilities with four elevators, an escalator and a platform that is wider than most others in the Loop.

The Washington/Wabash station sits steps from Millennium Park, historic Jeweler's Row and the vibrant East Loop and Michigan Avenue. It is expected to become one of CTA's top ten busiest rail stations, providing more than 10,000 rides on a daily basis on the Brown, Green, Orange, Pink and Purple Lines. The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) built the station, while working with its neighbors to minimize the disruption to Wabash Avenue merchants and traffic. The new station features a striking architectural "skeletal steel" canopy that provides extensive coverage of the station's platform from end to end, and offers four elevators, an escalator and a platform that is wider than most others in the Loop. The station also has multiple surveillance cameras to enhance passenger safety as well as real-time train arrival information

"This modern, bright and spacious rail station is another important step toward our goal of enhancing public transit options throughout the city," CTA President Carter said. "We are delighted

to have partnered with CDOT to create this fully accessible, architecturally significant new station that will serve Chicago and its visitors for decades to come.”

“We particularly want to thank the impacted businesses, shoppers and residents for their patience during the construction project,” CDOT Commissioner Scheinfeld said. “We are proud to provide greatly improved access to the east side of the Loop for workers and students, residents, tourists and other users of the CTA system.”

“This station will ensure people with disabilities will have an accessible stop on the east side of the Loop, opening new opportunities to access the city like never before,” Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities Commissioner Karen Tamley said. “It also brings us one step closer to creating 100 percent CTA rail station accessibility across the system and putting us even farther ahead of other legacy systems.”

The new station replaces stations at Madison/Wabash and Randolph/Wabash, both built in 1896. It will also improve travel time around the Loop for passengers and lower maintenance and operational costs for CTA. Additionally, the station was built to be sustainable, reusing existing structure, tracks and other elements and including the installation of bicycle racks to encourage alternative transportation as well as recycling bins on the platforms.

The Washington/Wabash station also features a new public artwork created especially for the station by Chicago-based artist Michiko Itatani. Two large art glass panels located on both sides of the mezzanine – *Cosmic Wanderlust 1 & 2* – reflect on human history and culture of the past, present and future. The artist’s multi-colored perspective of this theme features images of libraries, museums, public spaces and performance halls intermingled with images of the cosmos.

The \$75 million new station was funded through federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program.

Now that this station is open, the station just to the north, at Randolph and Wabash will be permanently closed on Sunday, Sept. 3. Demolition and removal will be completed before the end of 2017.

The Washington/Wabash station is the latest in Mayor Emanuel and CTA’s \$8 billion in transit improvement projects to build a 21st century, world-class transit system. Since Mayor Emanuel took office, the CTA has undertaken 46 station modernizations or comprehensive rehabilitations.

Other investments in the downtown Loop area include the Quincy Station, one of CTA’s oldest and best-preserved stations that is currently undergoing a major renovation that includes the installation of elevators and other improvements. The downtown Loop Link, opened in 2015, provides dedicated traffic lanes for buses, bicycles, pedestrians and cars to improve traffic flow and decrease congestion in the busy area of Washington, Madison, Clinton and Canal. And in 2016, Mayor Emanuel opened the new Union Station Transit Center next to the Loop Link, serving six bus routes and providing convenient connections between buses, Amtrak and Metra trains.

For more information about the Washington/Wabash Station, visit:
transitchicago.com/washingtonwabash

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